

WCGS NEWS
SEPTEMBER 1996

NEXT MEETING

Sunday September 15, 1996. 3 o'clock at Washington County Library. Our speaker will be Debra Blake, of North Carolina Archives and History. Ms. Blake is Coordinator of the State Cemetery Survey, and will explain its importance and procedures. Illustrative slides will be shown.

We had a former Coordinator to visit us six or seven years ago, and we, you recall, made a commitment to the Survey. Much good work was done, especially by Veronica Hasket, but somehow the project became short-circuited. At this meeting, lets all be prepared to comment, ask questions, and have a good discussion with Ms. Blake. By the October meeting, perhaps we will be prepared to decide if we should renew our commitment to the project.

PETTIGREW PAPERS

Joe A. Mobley, Administrator, Historical Publications Section, Archives and History , responds to our petition for publication of the PAPERS thus: "The former editor has retired.....,but we have enlisted another historian as editor. We will endeavor to complete as quickly as possible this and a number of other worthwhile projects....."

It will probably be well for us, individually and collectively, to help Mr. Mobley keep this project fresh-in-mind. He gets his mail at 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh 27601-2807.

NEW MEMBER!

We welcome Barbara M. Ghigo, 1505 Barbee Road, Shelby, NC 28105. Mrs. Ghigo is seeking information on Emsley Ange, Samuel Warren Bateman, James Iredell and Bailey Ambrose, and Alexander and Mary Frances Phelps. If you can help, give your info to Virginia on the 15th, or contact Barbara at the above address....or (704)482-2813.

DIRECTORS MEET

Our Board of Directors met on August 26. Chairman Vernon Everett will give a report at our September 15th meeting.

"OFFICIAL RECORDS"

Be prepared to vote, Sunday, on the proposal that WCGS sponser a community effort to buy the 128 volume OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES IN THE WAR OF THE REBELLION. If our membership votes "Yea", we will decide the Socity's monetary commitment.

In the opinion of your editor, this is a very worthy project. It is an excellent means of honoring an ancestor.....or an esteemed person yet alive. For individual doners, a bookplate would be affixed in his/her donated volume. The plate would state the person so honored, and the name of the giver.

VISIT TO JOYNER LIBRARY

I met with Maurice York, North Carolina Librarian, at East Carolina University's new library on August 30. Mr. York was most hospitable, and seems sincerely interested in working with us. He will be pleased to conduct us on a tour of the new facility in the near future. Also, he will be available to speak to us at one of our regular meetings.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

We will select a Committee, Sunday, to recommend a slate of officers for the annual election in October.

Halifax County Library

A forestry job recently turned into a genealogical research project, and took me to the Halifax Library. It's a delight. Even if you think you have no need to go there, DO go. You won't regret it....and you will find something, I bet.

ROSTER

We expect to mail the new, alphabetized roster within the month. It was ready to go, thanks to Phyllis Davenport, until a rash of address changes (mostly zip code) were reported.

"A TRUE COPY"

That your Washington County ancestor's will was probated before the devastating courthouse fires of the 1860's and 1870's doesn't always mean that you will find nothing in the Record of Wills. In rare instances a "true copy" was filed after the destruction of the original. This is true of the will of Dempsey Spruill, probated in 1842.

WCCS member Marie Long , Strasburg, VA, recently sought proof of the father/son relationship of Eli and Dempsey Woodley of Cool Springs District. Fortunately, a "true copy" of Spruill's will had been made in 1852, and filed with the Clerk in the late 1800's in place of the original. This will gave Marie reasonable proof that Dempsey Woodley was son of Eli Woodley, and grandson of Dempsey Spruill. Marie's interest in Dempsey Woodley had been whetted by our recent Journal articles on Woodley.

Following, we print my rough transcription of the last portions of the Spruill will. Item 17 is the segment that was helpful to Marie. The will is also interesting because of the signatures. You will see that Spruill used "his mark" in signing the codicil. We can be pretty sure that he was deathly ill at the time, and unable to write his normal signature. He died three days after the writing of the codicil. Hardy Hardison, one of the witnesses thereto, was Dempsey Spruill's doctor....and friend.

Sometime, when contribution of articles are at a low ebb(not the we expect that sad happening), the Spruill will may find its way into the Journal. With comments on the many persons and properties named, it will make a lengthly "article".

DECEMBER JOURNAL

Please be working on you articles for our next issue. Give us something related to the Revolutionary War if you can, but "regular" articles are as urgently needed. December will not be on the Revolution only.

NEWBERRY

Members Ella and Ray Newbury have just sent us "A Study of Sahara Plantation and the Newberry Family-1799-1800". More on this later. "Sahara" was on Pea Ridge, Skimmersville District.

15th Now I gave unto my Daughter Mary Swain the wife of Jeremiah Swain seventy five acres of land to be laid off to her out of the east end of the said tract of land whereon I now live with the death of her mother Mary Spruill.

16th I now give and bequeath unto my Daughter Ann Caroline the house and plantation whereon I now live that is to say after taking out the seventy five acres that I gave away Harry Swain as above stated to her the said Ann and her heirs forever after the death of her mother

17th I gave unto my Grand Son Dempsey Woodley the son of Eli Woodley twenty acres of land adjoining of the lands of Benjamin Arnold and James W. Davis and others to him and his heirs forever after the death of his Grand Mother Mary Spruill

18th I now gave unto Ebenezer Dunston my Grand Son whereon John Dunston last lived adjoining of Pettigrews Chaple to him all of the said tract of land and of my right and title Interest in the said tract of land to him and his heirs forever.

19th I now gave unto John Dunston ~~Dunston~~ my Grand son one tract of land known by the Buck head land laying in Tyrrell County all of my interest in the said tract of land to have his heirs and assigns forever

Now I revo^{ke} all other wills and this will to be my true and last will and Testament. Now I leave & ordain as my worthy friends my beloved wife Mary Spruill and my son William A Spruill my hole and sole Executors to this my last will and testament in witness whereoff I have hereto set my hand and fix my seal this the 11th day October in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight hundred and forty one

(Signed) Dempsey Spruill (Seal)

R.B. Davis

Asa Ansley

It is my wish and desire that all the legaces and bequests herein mentioned in this my last will and testament should be all considered as given subject to the life estate of my wife Mary according to the first, second and third clauses of this my will except the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars in money given to my Daughter Ann Caroline which I desire to be given to her without interest at any time according to the direction of her Mother and such gift to be considered independent of and apart from any share she may afterwards be entitled to receive in the division of my estate according to the directions of this my will given under my hand an seal this 4th day of March 1842

Witness Hardy Hardison
Josiah Collins

Dempsey ^{his} ~~x~~ Spruill
mark

State of North Carolina) Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions
Washington County) _____? Term 1842

The due execution of the foregoing last will and testament of Dempsey Spruill deceased was duly proved by the oath of Robert B. Davis one of the subscribing witnesses thereto who made oath that the said Dempsey Spruill in the presence of him said Robt B Davis and also in the presence of Asa Ansly the other subscribing witness signed sealed published and declared the foregoing paper writing preceding the codicil as and for his last will and testament and that the said Davis and the said Asa Ansly subscribed the same at the request of said testator in his presence and in the presence of each other as witnesses, And the due execution of the foregoing codicil to the last will and testament of the said Dempsey Spruill was duly proved by the oath of Josiah Collins one of the subscribing witnesses thereto who made oath that the testator Dempsey Spruill in the presence of him the said Collins and in the presence of Hardy Hardison the other subscribing witness signed sealed published & declared the same as & for a codicil to his last will and testament in the presence of said subscribing witnesses Whereupon Mary Spruill & William A. Spruill the Executrix and Executor named in the said will qualified thereunto and it is ordained that the said will and codicil be recorded and that letters testamentary issue

Test T. E. Pender Clk

State of North Carolina)
Washington County)

I F.F. Fagan Clk of the Court of Pleas &
Quarter Sessions of said County do certify the foregoing to be a true
copy from the records of my office

15 Sept 1852

F.F. Fagan Clk

Washington County
Genealogical Society,
P.O. Box 567,
Plymouth, NC 27962-0567